

4 FAM 460

TRAVEL AND TRAVEL ADVANCE MANAGEMENT

(TL:FIN-361; 04-28-2003)
(Office of Origin: A/RPS/DIR)

4 FAM 461 POLICY

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

This subchapter contains the fiscal policy related to travel claims, contracted charge cards, and travelers checks. The policy stated herein should be used in conjunction with those procedures set forth in 4 FAM 410 , 4 FAM 420 , and 4 FAM 430 .

4 FAM 462 AUTHORITY FOR TRAVEL

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

The authority for travel sets forth the conditions and manner in which travel will be performed, and the expenses for which the traveler is allowed to be reimbursed, as authorized by 22 U.S.C. 4081 or 5 U.S.C., Chapter 57. Officials responsible for financial management and administrative activities are expected to use prudence and make businesslike decisions when applying these regulations.

4 FAM 463 TRAVEL ADVANCES

4 FAM 463.1 Authority for Travel Advances

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

The authority to grant a travel advance is in 5 U.S.C. 5705, as defined in FTR, Title 41 CFR, Chapters 301-304. A travel advance is made for the express purpose of providing an employee authorized to travel at Government expense with funds to meet authorized travel expenses.

4 FAM 463.2 Applicability

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

a. A travel advance may be issued as a U.S. Treasury check, cash, travelers checks, or third-party drafts (where authorized). It is issued to an employee having proper identification and a valid travel authorization, Form

OF-144, Form OF-262, or equivalent form that cites the funds to be charged for the travel.

b. The term “employee” is defined in 3 FAM 1100 for Departmental and Foreign Service employees. Travel advances for Department authorized travel may be issued to employees of other agencies or individuals as provided by other regulations or agreements such as invitational travel to nonemployees or to personal service contractors (PSC) as defined 3 FAM 8000. The terms and conditions regarding access to and recovery of travel advances to a PSC must be included in the contract.

4 FAM 463.3 Approving (Granting) of Advances

4 FAM 463.3-1 Amount of Advance and When to Apply

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

a. An authorized traveler may be granted a travel advance for out-of-pocket travel expenses by the travel authorizing official whenever 80 percent of the estimated expenses exceed \$100. The minimum domestic advance is \$150 when travelers checks are being issued. For a Foreign Service National employee, the approving officer may approve a lesser amount when warranted. The amount that may be advanced is the estimated out-of-pocket expenses and should be shown on all temporary duty (TDY) travel authorizations.

b. A travel advance is to be made before commencement of travel. A supplemental advance may be authorized en route only when an amended authorization extends the period of the travel, an emergency situation exists, or the post of departure has difficulty in obtaining U.S. dollars.

c. Normally, a travel advance should be requested no earlier than 10 days prior to travel departure when being made by Treasury check using direct deposit to the account of the traveler. An advance in cash, or where authorized in travelers checks, may also be made by an authorized cashier from the cashier's operating cash advance in accordance with 4 FAM 390 and should be requested no earlier than 3 days prior to travel departure.

d. In addition, the certifying officer must be authorized to certify the travel costs for the accounts of the Department or agency being charged. When the regulations of the agency being charged with the advance are not available at the post, the provisions contained in this regulation apply.

4 FAM 463.3-2 Travelers With Individual Travel Charge Cards

(TL:FIN-361; 04-28-2003)

Domestically and where approved at posts, direct-hire or PSC employees expecting to travel more than once a year are responsible for obtaining and having a valid Government-authorized charge card; these employees will not receive a travel advance without a justification approved by FMP/F/DFS or the post *management officer*. The suspension of the charge card because of non-payment or negligence by the employee is not a valid reason for the issuance of a travel advance (see 4 FAM 466).

4 FAM 463.3-3 Travelers Without Individual Travel Charge Cards

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

Travel advances for 80 percent, or the current authorized level set by GSA, of the total estimated per diem and miscellaneous expenses may be issued to employees assigned outside of Washington or when it is determined that the employee should not be issued a charge card or when an advance is approved for a cardholder.

4 FAM 463.3-4 Advance Exceptions

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

a. Domestically, specific written justification (such as non-acceptance of a charge card or travelers checks, or when a traveler has not been issued a charge card) to issue a travel advance must be provided to the certifying officer by the appropriate bureau/office executive director authorizing travel for any travelers. In addition, cardholders may be issued a TDY travel advance by check or in cash limited to 80 percent of the estimated out-of-pocket expenses where the issuance or sale of travelers checks is not available to the cardholder.

b. The Comptroller General has defined a travel advance as a loan. Therefore, interest, penalty, and administrative charges may be assessed on amounts outstanding more than 30 calendar days after travel completion.

(1) When the repayment of a travel advance is not made within 30 days after travel completion, collection will be in accordance with the time frames set forth in 4 FAH-3 H-462 Exhibit H-462 .

(2) When it is necessary to use salary offset to collect the travel advance (NOTE: salary offset of a travel advance is 50 percent of disposable pay until repaid), the procedures set forth in 4 FAH-3 H-493.2

are applied in lieu of the procedures set forth in 4 FAH-3 H-493.4 .

(3) The notice provided to the traveler under 4 FAH-3 H-463.2 is deemed as the first notice under 4 FAM 492 .

(4) Travelers who fail to repay outstanding advances within the required time may be subject to disciplinary action.

(5) When travel is indefinitely postponed or canceled, any travel advance received must be repaid immediately.

c. Travel advances issued to a PSC employee will be recovered according to the terms and conditions included in each PSC contract, including offset against the contract.

4 FAM 464 TRANSFER ALLOWANCE ADVANCES

4 FAM 464.1 Authority

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

The authority to make an advance for transfer allowance and related relocation travel expense is provided in 22 U.S.C. 4081 and 5 U.S.C. Chapter 57. A transfer allowance is a grant that may be advanced for the express purpose of providing an employee, authorized post assignment travel at Government expense, with the funds to meet allowed transfer expenses at the rates specified in the Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians, Foreign Areas) (SR).

4 FAM 464.2 Applicability

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

Advances of transfer allowances and related travel expenses (post assignment travel/permanent change-of-station (PCS)) are calculated in accordance with certain limitation considerations specified in the procedures and in Section 253 of the SR.

4 FAM 464.3 Types of Advances

4 FAM 464.3-1 Home Service Transfer Allowance (HSTA) Advances

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

HSTA is an advance of funds made to an eligible employee being

assigned from a foreign post to a stateside assignment to defray relocation expenses. The amount advanced for the HSTA is based upon the amounts authorized in Section 253 of the SR and includes portions for miscellaneous, wardrobe and subsistence expenses. Subsistence expenses are limited to the prescribed maximum standard per diem rate within the Continental United States-CONUS.

4 FAM 464.3-2 Foreign Transfer Allowance (FTA) Advances

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

FTA is an advance of funds made to an eligible employee being assigned to a foreign post. FTA includes portions of miscellaneous, predeparture subsistence and wardrobe expenses due to inter-climatic zone transfer and are based upon the amounts authorized in Section 243 of the SR. Predeparture expenses are limited to the prescribed maximum per diem rate for the locality.

4 FAM 464.3-3 Miscellaneous Expense Allowance (MEA)

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

MEA is paid to an employee in accordance with SR sections 243 and 253 as a flat amount to defray various costs of relocating from one post of assignment to another. MEA is issued no earlier than 10 days prior to departure and is charged to the account shown on the travel authorization. The employee must refund any MEA received if the transfer is not completed (see 4 FAM 490).

4 FAM 464.3-4 Quarters Allowance (QA) Advances

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

QA is an advance of funds that may be granted an employee at a foreign post of assignment, based on the criteria and restrictions cited in Section 113 of the SR. When a QA advance is granted, an accounts receivable must be established to control the repayment of such an advance.

4 FAM 464.3-5 Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA) Advances

(TL:FIN-356; 11-30-95)

TQSA is an advance of funds that may be granted an employee, under the same provisions, criteria, and controls established for QA advances (see 4 FAM 464.3-4). The application for payment is modified to fit the circumstances of TQSA advance. When an advance for TQSA is granted,

an accounts receivable must be set up to control the repayment of such an advance.

4 FAM 465 TRAVEL CLAIMS

4 FAM 465.1 Traveler's Responsibility

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

Upon travel completion, each traveler is required to submit an expense report (voucher/claim) to account for the travel performed and for the related authorized costs. Travel is completed when the traveler arrives at the officially assigned post of duty or place of residence.

4 FAM 465.2 Accounting for Transportation

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

Travelers are responsible for the use and/or disposition of all tickets, Government Transportation Requests (GTR's), airline-denied boarding compensation checks, or promotional materials bought by GTR, Government Travel System (GTS), or other voucher.

4 FAM 465.3 Approving Official's Responsibility

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

a. Before a voucher claiming reimbursement of travel expenses is presented for certification by the certifying officer, the voucher must be administratively approved by an official (see 4 FAM 424) who has a requisite personal knowledge that the travel was performed by the traveler during the period claimed or who is responsible for supervising the traveler. (FTR 301.11-6 provides further guidance.)

b. Administrative approval confirms that the traveler made the authorized trip and performed the official duties expected of him/her. Such signing does not indicate that the approving officer has examined each individual item in the voucher for legality or availability of funds, but does signify that those claimed items specified in FTR 301.11-6(a) and (b) are authorized and approved (see FAM 6).

c. Administrative approval of the travel vouchers by approving officials must be completed within 2 work days of the traveler submitting the voucher.

4 FAM 465.4 Prepayment Examination of Vouchers/Claims

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

Prior to certification, each travel reimbursement voucher is examined according to voucher audit standards.

4 FAM 465.5 Certification for Payment of Approved Claims

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

All processed travel vouchers are certified for payment, in accordance with 4 FAM 430 , on Voucher Schedule of Payments (SF-1166). Certified payments are forwarded to Treasury or the servicing USDO, according to 4 FAM 434 , so that payment of the claim can be within 25 work days after travel completion. Vouchers are payable in U.S. dollars.

4 FAM 466 GOVERNMENT CONTRACTED INDIVIDUAL CHARGE CARDS

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

The Department, through the General Services Administration (GSA) contract, authorizes the issuance and maintenance of individual charge cards to all travelers according to FPMR A-85, Travel and Transportation Expense Payment System Utilizing Contractor Issued Charge Cards and Travelers Checks. Compliance with all published procedures are mandatory.

4 FAM 467 GOVERNMENT CONTRACTED TRAVELERS CHECKS

4 FAM 467.1 Authority

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

The Department, through the General Services Administration (GSA) contract, is authorized to maintain an inventory of travelers checks to issue or sell in accordance with FPMR A-85, Travel and Transportation Expense Payment System Utilizing Contractor Issued Charge Cards and Travelers Checks.

4 FAM 467.2 Applicability

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

Government contracted travelers checks may be issued to travelers as authorized travel advances in lieu of cash or a Treasury check. In addition, travelers checks may be sold to travelers possessing a Government contracted charge card. No fees are charged or collected for the travelers checks issued as travel advances or sold to cardholders.

4 FAM 468 CONGRESSIONAL TRAVEL

(TL:FIN-352; 5-30-95)

a. Public Law 95-384, as amended, authorizes payment of transportation, per diem, and other expenses to fund the foreign travel of members of Congress and Congressional staff members. This authority establishes the permanent appropriation to be charged as well as the authorizations and restrictions which are applicable to congressional delegations (CODEL) or staff delegations (STAFFDEL).

b. Particular procedures pertain to Congressional travel only, and include the rates to be paid, manner of payment, accounts charged, authorizations required, use and exchange of foreign currencies, and related reporting requirements.

4 FAM 469 UNASSIGNED